

REMARKS

Claims 1 to 27 are all the claims pending in the application, prior to the present Amendment.

Claims 5, 6, 9-13 and 21-25 have been objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim.

In addition, claims 1, 3, 7, 26 and 27 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over WO 01/24924 to Obana et al, which corresponds to U.S. Patent No. 6,706,919 to Obana et al.

In response, applicants have canceled claim 1, 3 and 7, and have amended claims 5, 6, 9-13, 21, 22, 24, 25 and 26, so that none of the claims depend on a rejected base claim. Claims 26 and 27 now depend from claim 5.

In view of the above, applicants submit the objection and rejection have been overcome.

Applicants have canceled withdrawn claims 14-20.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

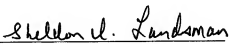
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Date: May 4, 2009


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